DEMAND VII—PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT INCLUDING WATER WORKS AND DRAINAGE.

MR. I. C. CHACKO (*Chief Engineer*): Sir, I rise to move for a grant of Rs. 3,340 under Demand VII—Public Works Department including Water Works and Drainage. Part of this amount is meant for the construction of a kitchen at the Oollampara Barracks. The kitchen for the Police at Oollampara is housed in a group of old buildings. The present accommodation in the kitchen is inadequate and it is very necessary to provide an additional kitchen. Similarly there are no permanent latrines at present. There are only temporary latrines made with bamboos and they are renewed every now and then. It is proposed to construct a permanent latrine at a cost of Rs. 2,700. I move that the House may be pleased to grant the amount for these purposes.

The motion was put and carried, and the grant was made.

DEMAND IX—COMMERCIAL TRANSPORT.

MR. E. G. SALTER: Sir, I move for a supplementary grant of Rs. 4,00,000 under Demand IX—Commercial Transport and in anticipation of the questions which will naturally be raised by honourable members, may I be permitted to make a few observations? It was anticipated at the time of the preparation of the 1118 Budget that before the end of 1118 all the buses of the Transport Department would be converted for operation on charcoal. But unfortunately we have not come anywhere near it. It is necessary that the engines should be in perfect condition when the conversion is made. But accessories and spare parts are not available, we now have to make them, including even the pistons and cylinder liners. So, instead of being able to turn out three engines a week, it took 10 days to overhaul one. That is one reason.

Secondly, owing to the shortage of sugar in South India, the Government of Madras found it expedient to prevent the export of jaggery. Therefore the Travancore Sugar Factory ceased to function, and consequently the supply of alchohol which the Department used to get was stopped. The price of fuel also went up. There was considerable difficulty to obtain charcoal. Some contractors failed to supply and the price was going up day by day. We were competing with the South India Railway Company who are purchasing very large quantities of firewood. We found difficulty in getting sufficient charcoal in running our vehicles. It is hoped that we shall not spend the whole of the Rs. 4,00,000 but it is necessary for the amount to be available to meet emergencies. I submit to the honourable members that the amount may be granted.

MR. M. R. NARAYANA PILLAI: May I know the total expenses so far met out of the budget allotment of 1118 for the Commercial Department?

MR. E. G. SALTER.: I regret I must claim notice.

MR. M. R. NARAYANA PILLAI: How many vehicles are there fitted with charcoal gas plant?

MR. E. G. SALTER: 51.

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